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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/846,490	04/30/2001	Benjamin Niles Eldridge	P6D2-US	5397

27520 7590 08/14/2002

FORMFACTOR, INC.
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EXAMINER

ARBES, CARL J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3729

DATE MAILED: 08/14/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/846,490

Applicant(s)

ELDRIDGE ET AL.

Examiner

C. J. Arbes

Art Unit

3729

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 June 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 37-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 37-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

In view of Applicants' prior art submission and further in view of submitting more relevant prior art a new **non-Final** Office Action is given hereinafter

Claims 37-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 37 Applicants recite that they deposit "at least one layer of at least one conductive material on the surface..." and also "deposit at least one layer of at least one conductive material into the openings...". This language is held to be unclear, vague and indefinite inasmuch as it cannot be determined if the conductive is the same or is different. As applied to claim 38 it cannot be understood how one "deposits a joining material ... into the openings..." after the openings already contain conductive material therein. It is far from clear the scopes of these claims.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

37-42 *cy*

Claim ~~37~~, as understood, is further rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Yanof et al (of record).

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to

be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 38-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yanof et al. Yanof et al teach a method of making a probe wherein conductive material is plated onto a surface of a substrate (Cf Fig 2, element 22 and related disclosure). Masking material is deposited over the conductive material and openings are patterned therein. Another conductive material is deposited into the mask's openings and the masking is removed. It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to deposit joining material onto the conducting material in order to provide strength and resilience (Cf Col 5). As further applied to Claim 42 it is held to be mere design choice to provide that the resilient contact structures are disposed atop a space transformer because the tip structures can be attached to just about anything which is useful to conduct electrical current i.e. to act as a test probe. As applied to claim 43 the limitation recited therein is also held to be one of design choice since the character of the substrate is not relevant to the manufacture of probe tips. That is, the probe tips can be placed onto any substrate which conducts electrical current.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to C. J. Arbes at telephone number (703)308-1857.


CARL J. ARBES
PRIMARY EXAMINER